

Jacobs Building
523 Exchange Street
Geneva,
Ontario County
New York

HABS No. NY-5705

HABS
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE NEW YORK	COUNTY ONTARIO COUNTY	TOWN OR VICINITY GENEVA
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) JACOBS BUILDING		HABS NO. NY-5705
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 523 Exchange Street		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) Ca. 1890 (Geneva City Water Meter Records; Geneva City Directories (1888-92))	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Not known. William G. Dove, probable contractor	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) The building originally was a double mercantile building, with the lower floor used for store space and the upper floors for office space. For many years the first floor of the northern section of the building (the front faces (con't to page 2))		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Victorian commercial building style		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Brick exterior; cut stone block foundation; wood joist construction and wood frame.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) The building was originally a rectangle measuring 26' X 90'. The front (west) elevation was three stories high and the rear elevation two stories high. (con't to page 2)		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE The front upper windows are topped with arched hoodmolds with a leaf motif. Typical Victorian 2-over-2 double-hung sash are used on these windows. The cornice is recessed with a decorative brick pattern.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) The materials of the original walls and ceilings are not known, since they are now covered with plasterboard and paneling.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Partitions have been installed on the upper two floors to accomodate changing office need of various business firms. In 1942 the second floor was altered to accomodate the Freeman Business School. In 1950 the first floor, then housing "Stanley's", was (con't to page 2)		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Good condition throughout.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE The project was the result of a Memorandum of Agreement between HUD and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in compliance with Executive Order 11593 as a mitigative effort in a new housing redevelopment plan for the City of Geneva. (con't to page 3)		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) See attached sheet, page 3		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Helen P. Maney, City Liaison for Hotel Seneca project, City of Geneva, New York; Susan McCown, Historic American Buildings Survey,		DATE Nov. 1980 Feb. 1982

SIGNIFICANCE (continued):

west) was operated by Meyer Jacobs, one of the original owners of the building, and later by his son Perry Jacobs, as a men's clothing and tailoring business. This was ceased in 1937 with Perry Jacobs' death. The Mutual Clothing Store leased the Jacobs-owned store for a number of years. From 1947 to 1960 the store, still owned by the Jacobs family, was leased to Stanley Emerman for use as an exclusive women's dress shop called "Stanley's". From 1960 to 1980 the building was "Peck's", also a women's dress shop, with Steadman Peck as the owner and proprietor.

The southern section of the building was leased to the August Harris Variety Store from 1895 to 1903. From 1903 to 1905 Henry Monroe and Son were tenants, operating a billiard and pool hall. From 1905 to 1909 Louis Monroe, also a tenant, continued the business. The entire southern section was bought circa 1906 by Samuel K. Nester, who was then the owner of the adjacent Nester Hotel (HABS No. NY-5706), and the upper two floors of this building were incorporated in the hotel. In 1912 The Nester Hotel was re-named Hotel Seneca and the entire southern section was demolished and replaced with a new 5-story addition. The northern section of the building remained intact.

Various businesses have been tenants of the upper floors over the years, including The John Hancock Insurance Company at one time. From 1942 to 1966 the Freeman Business School occupied second floor. In recent years the upper floors became increasingly obsolete and were rented less often. The last tenant of the upper floor was the Wendy Brown Art School, which moved out in 1976.

SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (continued):

A 1950 brick addition built on the rear of the first floor increased the building's dimensions to 26' X 130'.

The interior first floor space is open as is typical of a retail store. Office space and dressing rooms are provided on the south. A storage area is enclosed at the rear of the store.

MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES (continued):

expanded by adding a brick addition in the rear.

In 1954 the first floor was remodeled considerably and the front of the building was re-faced.

OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE (continued):

The building and the adjacent Nester Hotel (HABS No. NY-5706) were demolished in 1981.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

- A. Early Views: Old photographs of the building are at the Geneva Historical Society, Prouty Chew Museum, 543 South Main Street, Geneva, New York
- B. Interview: Stanley Emerman, 27 Seneca Street, Geneva, New York, first floor tenant from 1947 to 1960, regarding interior remodelings
- C. Primary and unpublished sources:
 - Assessment Records, Geneva City Hall, Geneva, New York
 - Property Records. Office of County Clerk, Ontario County, Court House, Canandaigua, New York

The following is the chain of title of the Jacobs Building, 523 Exchange Street, Geneva, Ontario County, New York. Deed records for this building are kept at the Office of the County Clerk, Ontario County Courthouse, Canandaigua, New York.

- 1884 Deed, June 16, 1884, recorded in Liber 177, page 547.
William Whitwell to John Dove and Meyer Jacobs
- 1891 Deed, June 18, 1891, recorded in Liber 195, page 256.
John Dove (his undivided 1/2 interest) to William Dove
- 1904 Deed, August 27, 1904, recorded in Liber 242, page 516.
William Dove (his undivided 1/2 interest) to Meyer Jacobs
- 1928 Deed, November 21, 1928, recorded in Liber 350, page 508.
Estate of Meyer Jacobs, deceased, to Perry M. Jacobs
- 1933 Deed, April 17, 1933, recorded in Liber 373, page 148.
Perry M. Jacobs to Bessie L. Jacobs, Elliston Jacobstein,
and The First National Bank and Trust Company of Rochester,
all as Trustees
- 1936 Deed, December 24, 1936, recorded in Liber 387, page 447.
Bessie L. Jacobs, Elliston Jacobstein, and The First National
Bank and Trust Company, all as Trustees, to Perry M. Jacobs
and Bessie L. Jacobs, husband and wife.
- 1960 Deed, September 20, 1960, recorded in Liber 639, page 646.
Estate of Bessie L. Jacobs, deceased, to Myron V. Jacobs and
Minette E. Jacobstein (now Clark). (Perry M. Jacobs
predeceased Bessie L. Jacobs on November 20, 1937)